

Welcome to *Board Brief*, a summary of recent decisions of the CEC Board of Directors, as well as updates on the work of CEC’s committees from their required reports to the board (not including any actions taken by the board based on a motion from a committee and noted below).

Following is a summary of an online vote following the November 2023 board meeting, and key outcomes the January 24, 2024, board meeting. Committee updates from year-end and interim reports appear after approved motions.

Awards

Named Michigan CEC Executive Director, Ann Walton, as a recipient of CEC’s Impact Award, which recognizes an individual or community/corporate organization that has had an impact on CEC’s strategic work and/or the field of special education.

Workgroups

Voted to establish a Family Partnerships Workgroup to explore how to support CEC members to effectively engage/partner with “all” families across diverse communities and lived experiences in schools, research, and policy work.

Committee Updates

Finance & Audit Standing Committee (Year-End)

- CEC became debt-free in 2023.
- CEC received an unqualified opinion (to audit rating) for 2022.
- Approved new auditor, Wegner CPAs, to perform 2023 audit.

Leadership Development Committee (LDC)/Leadership Development Program Subcommittee (LDPS) (“Quarterly;” November 2023 and January 2024 reports)

- The LDC Completed Board of Directors application reviews, interviews, and slating for election.
- The LDC convened an internal workgroup to identify and address barriers within the application and/or application processes that may discourage teachers from applying for the Board of Directors and/or the LDC. These changes include offering applicants the option to pick from either an “A” or “B” question for one of the Phase 2 questions, and to submit a brief bio in lieu of a CV/ résumé.
- Developed an inclusive, broad definition of leadership:
CEC views leadership through a broad lens that is evident in multiple settings. Leadership can be demonstrated by providing resources, being an instructional or curriculum specialist, being a mentor or data coach, among many other tasks. Thus, we define leadership as the ability to guide and inspire individuals or groups towards a common goal, leveraging one’s vision, influence, and communication skills. Leadership requires decision making, providing direction, and fostering an environment of trust and collaboration that drives positive change to achieve collective objectives.
- The LDPS kicked off the second cohort of [Leadership CEC](#) with its first content-based session in August, and held networking meetings of the optional year two program for the inaugural cohort of *Leadership CEC*. This second year was intended to provide participants with the

opportunity to identify how they could contribute to furthering unit and division leadership development, in alignment with efforts being made through other CEC initiatives.

Development and Fundraising Committee (Year-End)

- Continued CEC's **annual giving/stewardship campaign** focused on CEC's annual membership renewal program and promotion of CEC's five endowment programs; direct appeal strategy through partnerships with CEC divisions and units; **convention-based strategy** promoting CEC giving program; enhance the already successful "**Giving Tuesday**" campaign.
 - Convention 2023 focused on three fundraising events:
 - *Awards Luncheon* – which included an overview presentation of CEC's fundraising efforts and a pinning ceremony of new Elizabeth Farrell Society members.
 - *Giving Booth* – which included a presence in the CEC Hub to inform members about CEC giving.
 - *Donor Reception* – where anyone who had donated in the past was invited to attend and converse with other donors and be thanked for their donations.
 - Convention 2024 will include all of these efforts as well, and we are excited to continue to increase the awareness of CEC.
- [The Elizabeth Farrell Society](#) continues to grow with 11 new members since Convention 2023. Total membership is now 21.

Diversity Committee (Year-End)

The Diversity Committee demonstrated outstanding dedication to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion within the field of special education through its active involvement in the CEC **Diversity Leadership Academy**. The Academy, a robust professional development program, was designed for special education professionals who share a common commitment to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). The committee, strategically divided into three sub-committees, played a pivotal role in shaping the application process for the academy. Through meticulous planning and collaboration, the committee members contributed to the creation of an inclusive and accessible application, ensuring that it resonated with the values of diversity and equity. Furthermore, the committee actively engaged in recruiting applicants for the Academy, reaching out to a diverse pool of special education professionals who embody the principles of DEI. In creating the Diversity Leadership Academy, the committee not only fulfilled its mandate but also laid the groundwork for a transformative professional development experience. The efforts invested in the application process and recruitment underscored the committee's commitment to nurturing a cadre of special education professionals dedicated to advancing diversity and inclusion within the field. The applications for the Diversity Leadership Academy closed in January and participants will be announced in late February.

Honors Committee (Year-End)

- With the completion of the reviews of the Outstanding CEC Leadership and Lifetime Achievement awards in the 3rd quarter, all award criteria were reviewed in 2023.
- The option to submit video responses for nominations was offered for the first time this year.
- Recipients were selected for each award category, including the new Paraeducator Award approved by the board in July.

Teacher of the Year: Theresa Copple

- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Itinerant Teacher, Riverside County (CA) Office of Education

CEC Outstanding Paraeducator: Wendy Percino

- RST Aide, Global Education Academy, Los Angeles, CA

CEC Special Educator Rising Star: Tori Nielsen

- Middle School Special Education Teacher, Douglas School District, SD

CEC Outstanding Student Chapter Advisor: Katie Leckenby

- Assistant Professor, Slippery Rock University, PA

CEC Special Education Research: Christopher Lemons

- Associate Professor, Stanford University, CA

Outstanding CEC Leadership: Aleksandra Hollingshead

- Associate Professor, University of Idaho

CEC Special Education Lifetime Achievement: Mary Beth Bruder

- Professor of Community Medicine and Health Promotion, Pediatrics, and Educational Psychology at the University of Connecticut where she directs the A.J. Pappanikou Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service (UCEDD) and the Leadership Program in Neurodevelopmental and Other Disabilities (CT LEND).

Policy Steering Committee (Year-End)

- The following position statements are currently under review:
 - CEC's Position Statement on Promoting Positive Outcomes in All Educational Settings
 - CEC's Position statement on Progress Monitoring
- The drafting of the following position statement is making progress:
 - CEC's Position Statement on Caseload vs. Workload
- The Section 504 workgroup is awaiting updated guidance from the U.S. Department of Education

Professional Standards and Practice Committee (Year-End)

- Initial gifted standards approved by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP); workgroup is working on final revisions before public launch.
- Continuing to work and support the Advanced Standards Revision workgroup.

Publications Committee (Year-End)

- Completed the selection process of two editorial teams, one for *TEACHING Exceptional Children* and one for *Exceptional Children* in 2023 and developed more detailed collaboration plans with the incoming editors and met with outgoing editors to help support the incoming teams.
- In 2024, the committee's plans include a focus on publications, including topics, the review systems, reviewers, and representation.

Student and Early Career Committee (Interim)

- Selected Mia Chudzik from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign for the Outstanding Graduate Student Award and Katie Espinosa from the University of Missouri for the Outstanding Undergraduate Student Award.
- Planned the 2024 Student and Early Career Mentoring Breakfast at the CEC Convention & Expo.
- Will be contributing to the development of new resources for student chapters.

Questions? Contact Executive Director [Chad Rummel](#).